

**MARVEL
COMICS**

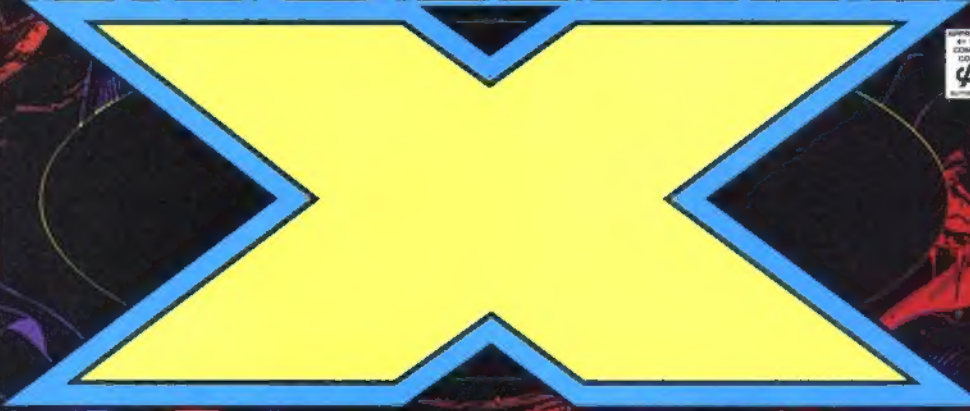


#26

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**MACKIE
LIM
FLOREA**

MUTANT



DIRECT EDITION

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IN ANOTHER PLACE - IN ANOTHER LIFE - ALEX SUMMERS LED A TEAM OF MUTANTS IN A BATTLE AGAINST OPPRESSION. HIS METHODS WERE EXTREME, HIS TACTICS QUESTIONABLE, BUT - IN HIS SOUL - HE KNEW THAT HE WAS FIGHTING FOR THE GREATER GOOD. NOW THAT SOUL HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER WORLD, AND SUMMERS, ALSO KNOWN AS HAVOK, HAS FOUND HIMSELF LIVING A LIE, ALLIED WITH A TEAM OF MUTANTS WHO ARE SINISTER, PARALLEL VERSIONS OF HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY. IT IS TO THIS DARK, NEW PLACE THAT HAVOK HAS COME, WHERE HE STANDS AS A MAN ALONE... A MUTANT ALONE. ALEX SUMMERS IS MUTANT X. FEAR HIM. FEAR FOR HIM. STAN LEE PRESENTS:

MUTANT X

Long Day's Journey Through the Night

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SHE IS CALLED
BLOODSTORM.

SHE IS A
MUTANT...

... AND A
VAMPIRE.

THE FIRST, A GENETIC ANOMALY FOUND IN ONE OUT OF EVERY MILLION PEOPLE ON THIS PLANET, GIVES HER THE POWER TO CONTROL RAIN, THUNDER, LIGHTNING AND ALL THE VAST FORCES OF THE WEATHER.

THE SECOND, A CURSE BESTOWED UPON HER BY DRACULA, LORD OF THE VAMPIRES.

TOGETHER THEY ALLOW HER TO EASILY MOVE FROM HERO TO...

... SOMEONE TO
CONTEND WITH.

AS THE PATRONS OF THIS SLEAZY UNDERGROUND BAR, CALLED THE BUCKET OF BLOOD, ARE ABOUT TO LEARN.

WHERE
IS HE?



I WILL HAVE HIM!
DO YOU HEAR ME?



YOU MAY ALL THINK YOU CAN HIDE HIM FROM ME.

THAT HE IS ONE TO BE WORSHIPPED.



THAT HE WILL CARE FOR YOU AND GRANT YOU GREAT POWER, BUT ...

... HE WILL GIVE YOU NOTHING BUT LIES AND PAIN!

LADY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT OR WHO YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, BUT ...

... NO ONE MESSES WITH BIG JIM'S BAR! ESPECIALLY NO MUTIE!



KRAK!

I THINK YOU DO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.

I CAN SMELL IT ON YOUR BLOOD-STAINED BREATH.

IT PERMEATES EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY OF THIS PLACE.

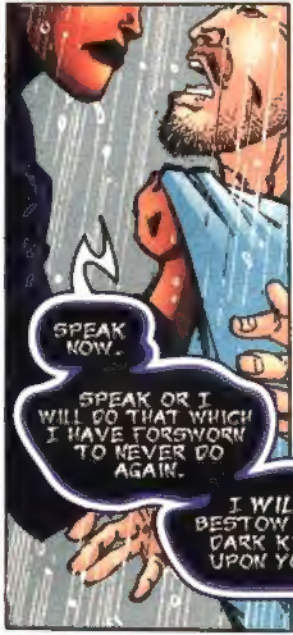
YOU ARE ALL PRETENDERS.

CRAVING A THING YOU CAN NEVER UNDERSTAND.

HE LOVES TO FEED ON YOUR KIND.



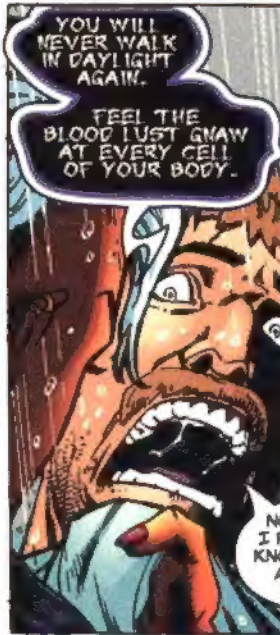
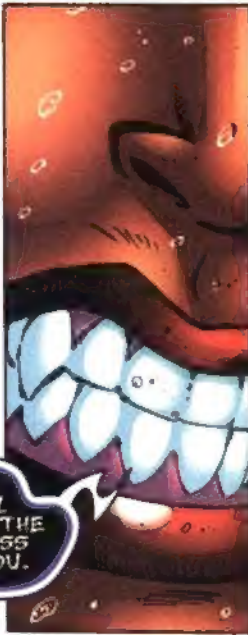
MAYBE IT IS
TIME YOU LOOKED
INTO THE EYES OF
A REAL VAMPIRE.



SPEAK
NOW.

SPEAK OR I
WILL DO THAT WHICH
I HAVE FORGORN
TO NEVER DO
AGAIN.

I WILL
BESTOW THE
DARK KISS
UPON YOU.



YOU WILL
NEVER WALK
IN DAYLIGHT
AGAIN.

FEEL THE
BLOOD JUST GNAW
AT EVERY CELL
OF YOUR BODY.



NO... PLEASE...
I REALLY DON'T
KNOW WHAT YOU
ARE TALKING
ABOUT. I--

DIE
TONIGHT
THEN!

BKOOOM!



THAT'LL BE
ENOUGH OF
THAT THEN
THERE,
THERE!

WHO
DARES!



DIS AIN'T LIKE YOU, ORORO. HAD TO FOLLOW YOUR TRAIL THROUGH HALF THE BLOOD BARS IN DIS HERE TOWN.

WHOD'A THOUGH THERE'D BE SO MANY VAMP WANNABES, HEH?

SO HOW'S ABOUT YOU DROP D'GUY AND WE TAKE THIS SOME PLACE QUIET.

MAYBE SEE IF WE CAN TALK ABOUT DIS UNDEAD TO UNDEAD, HEH?



MAYBE YOU COULD ENLIGHTEN ME.

LATER, THIS CREATURE IS ABOUT TO TELL ME EVERYTHING HE KNOWS.



THAT DERE MAN IS ABOUT TO WET HIS PANTS.

PUT HIM DOWN. I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU DO SOMETHIN' YOU GONNA REGRET BIG TIME.

IT WOULD BE JUST ONE MORE OF MANY REGRETS, MY FRIEND!

BACK OFF, GAMBIT!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IS AT RISK HERE!



HAVE IT YOUR WAY, THERE!

OOLPH!



Y'ALL CLEAR THE DECKS! D'BUCKET OF BLOOD IS 'BOUT TO UNDERGO SOME RENOVATIONS!



I NEED THEM, GAMBIT!



NO, CHERE, YOU NEED SOMETHIN', BUT IT AIN'T DEAD.



FRAKOOOM!



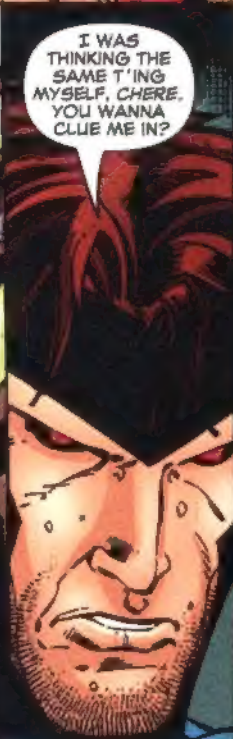
POOM!



DIS IS NICE.

YOU AND ME, WE DON'T GET TO DO DIS KINDA T'ING TOO MUCH.

WHAT HAVE I DONE? WHAT WAS I THINKING?



I WAS THINKING THE SAME T'ING MYSELF, CHERE, YOU WANNA CLUE ME IN?



YES.

MAYBE TELLING YOU WOULD HELP ME TO CLARIFY MY OWN THOUGHTS.

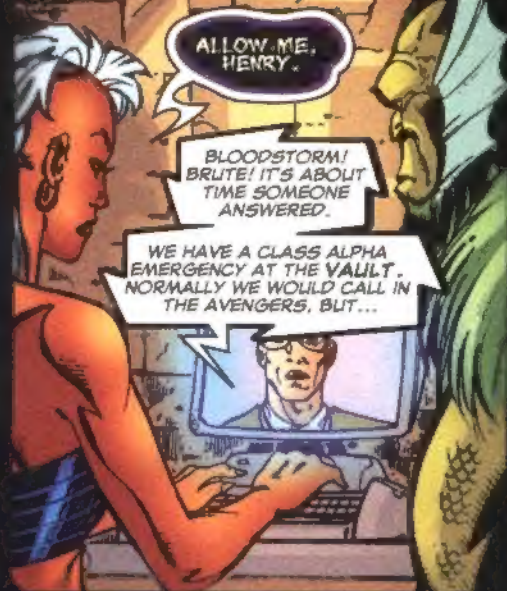
IT BEGAN...



"...EARLIER THIS EVENING. BACK AT THE CASTLE OF THE SIX."

HENRY?
DO YOU REQUIRE ASSISTANCE?

ER... YEAH!
I CAN'T REMEMBER
HOW TO ANSWER
THIS THINGY.



ALLOW ME,
HENRY.

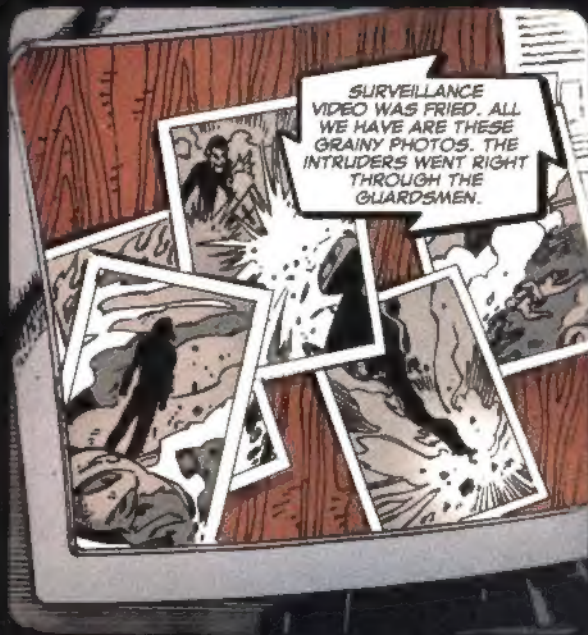
BLOODSTORM!
BRUTE! IT'S ABOUT
TIME SOMEONE
ANSWERED.

WE HAVE A CLASS ALPHA
EMERGENCY AT THE VAULT.
NORMALLY WE WOULD CALL IN
THE AVENGERS, BUT...



BUT IN THIS
CASE THE SIX WILL
HAVE TO DO? ISN'T
THAT RIGHT, AGENT
GYRICH?

WELL... ER...
WE'VE HAD A
BREAK-IN, HAVOK,
NO TIME TO BANDY
WORDS.



SURVEILLANCE
VIDEO WAS FRIED. ALL
WE HAVE ARE THESE
GRAINY PHOTOS. THE
INTRUDERS WENT RIGHT
THROUGH THE
GUARDSMEN.



WE'LL
BE RIGHT
THERE.

"AS YOU MAY RECALL,
HAVOK WAS AS GOOD
AS HIS WORD.

"WE WERE AT THE
SUPER-POWERED-VILLAIN
PRISON, KNOWN AS **THE
VAULT**, WITHIN THE HOUR.

"THE PLACE WAS IN
A STATE OF DISARRAY
AND GYRICH WAS HIS
NORMAL CHARMING SELF.

"WE WERE THERE TO
AID HIM AND ALL HE
COULD DO WAS THROW
MORE BUREAUCRATIC
RED TAPE IN OUR WAY.

"THERE WAS CLEARLY
ANTAGONISM BETWEEN
GYRICH AND CAPTAIN
AMERICA.

"BUT MOSTLY WE
WERE LEFT TO
WONDER EXACTLY
WHAT THE SIX WERE
CALLED IN FOR.



"HE OBVIOUSLY DID
NOT TRUST US.

"HE SPOKE OF
SECURITY CLEARANCES
AND 'NEED TO KNOW.'

"HE WANTED US
TO RECOVER SOME
SORT OF BOX WHICH
WAS STOLEN FROM
THE VAULT, BUT
WOULD NOT TELL
US WHO TOOK IT,
OR WHAT IT
CONTAINED."





"HAVOK WAS IN NO MOOD TO HAVE US TREATED IN SUCH A MANNER."

"THEIR DISCUSSION QUICKLY DEVELOPED INTO AN ARGUMENT."

"AND THAT WAS WHEN MY PRENATURAL SENSES FIRST PICKED UP ON IT."

"WITH THEIR ANGRY VOICES POUNDING THROUGH MY EARS... THE STENCH FILLED MY NOSTRILS."



"I COULD FEEL IT IN THE PIT OF MY STOMACH."

"A HEAT ROSE THROUGH MY BODY, THREATENING TO OVERWHELM ME WITH A FEELING I KNEW TOO WELL."



"I NOW KNEW WHAT THE BOX GYRICH WANTED RETRIEVED CONTAINED."

"I KNEW."



"I WILL RETRIEVE IT FOR YOU."

"EXCUSE ME."



"WE DON'T NEED THE ENTIRE TEAM. I WILL DO IT."
"I WILL TRACK THE THIEVES DOWN AND RECOVER THIS BOX."
"IT TAKES A THIEF TO CATCH A THIEF."





YEAH... AND THEN YOU TOOK OFF. WITHOUT CLEARANCE FROM HAVOK... WITHOUT A GOODBYE... NOTHIN'--



I DO NOT NEED CLEARANCE FROM ANYONE, REMY. THIS IS SOMETHING I CHOSE TO HANDLE ON MY OWN.



YEAH... WELL NOW YOU'VE GOT COMPANY. COMPANY WHO CAN TELL YOU THAT, IF YOU HAD STUCK AROUND A LITTLE LONGER, YOU WOULD HAVE FOUND OUT THAT THE THIEVES' ESCAPE VEHICLE WAS DAMAGED BY A VAULT GUARDSMAN.

AND THAT IT CRASH-LANDED RIGHT OUTSIDE OF DIS HERE TOWN.

NOW, THERE... WHAT'S IN THE BOX? YOU HOLDIN' SOMETHIN' BACK FROM ME, NEH?

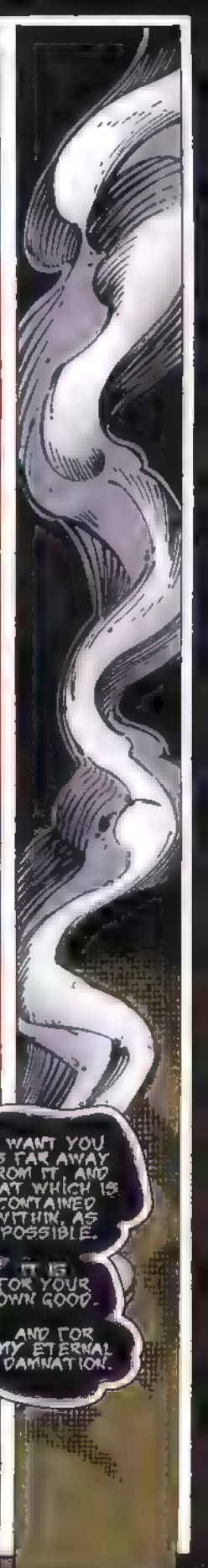
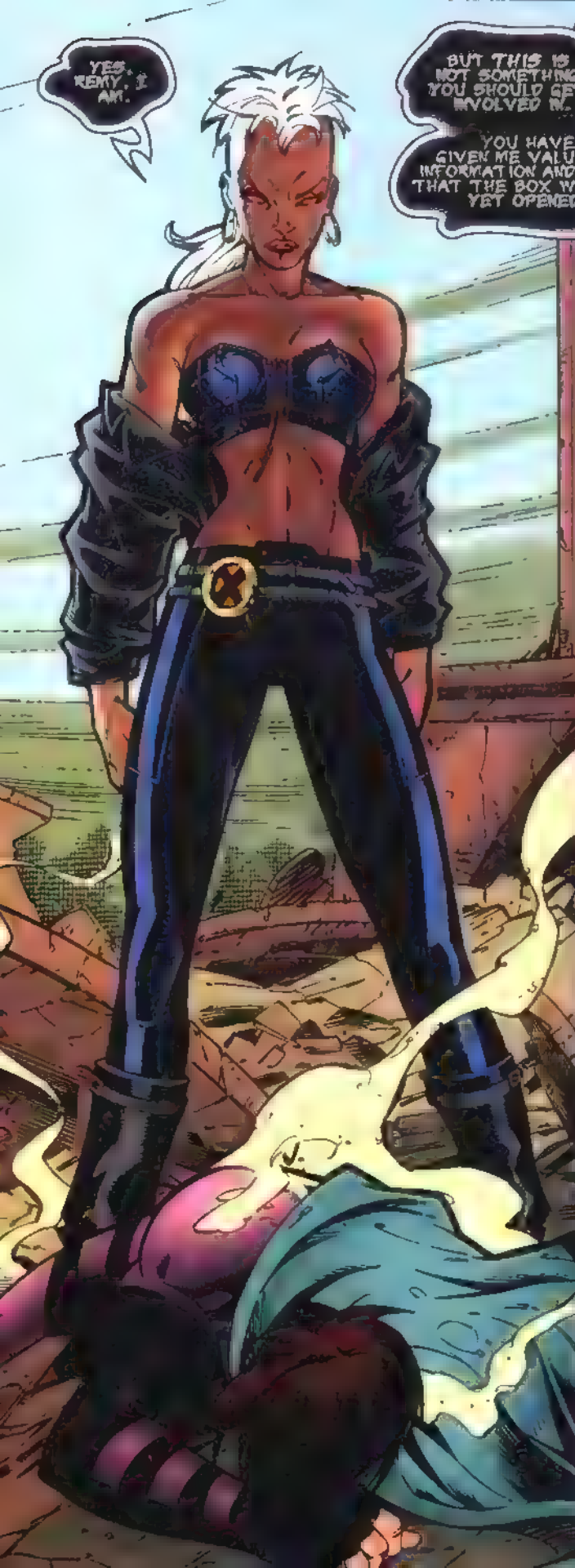
ARGH!

FRAKOOM!

YES,
REMY, I
AM.

BUT THIS IS
NOT SOMETHING
YOU SHOULD GET
INVOLVED IN.

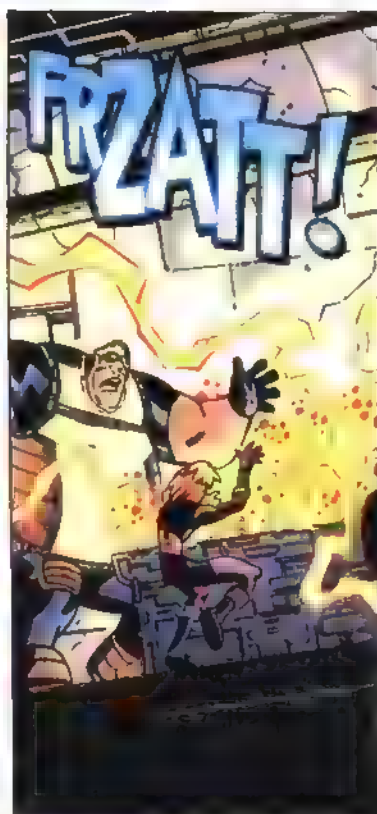
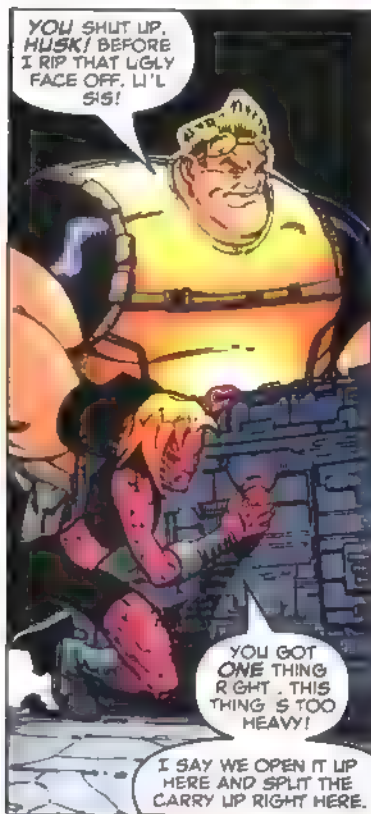
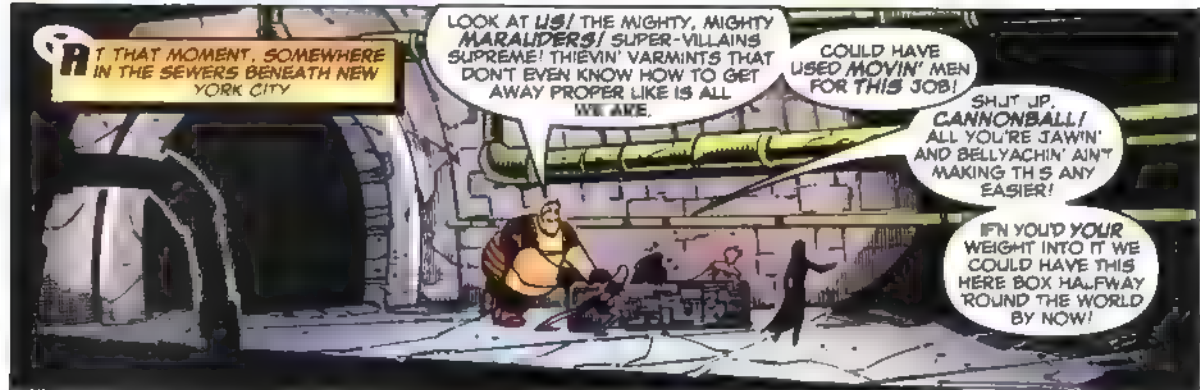
YOU HAVE
GIVEN ME VALUABLE
INFORMATION AND HOPE
THAT THE BOX WAS NOT
YET OPENED.

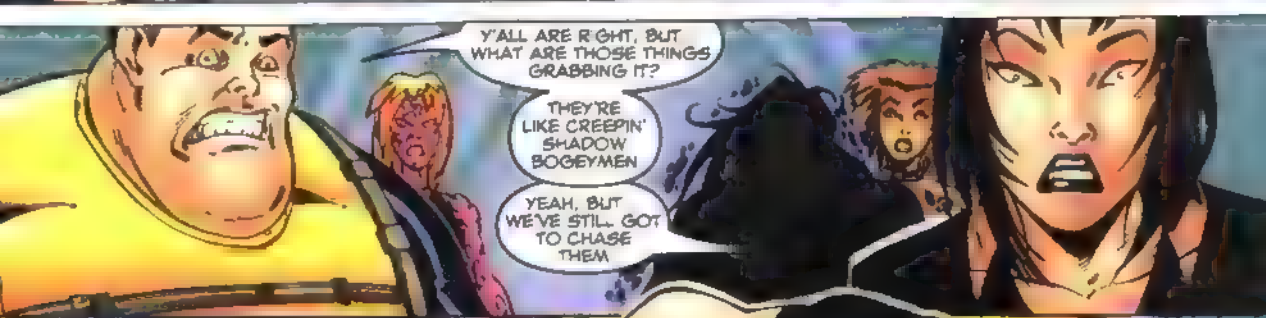
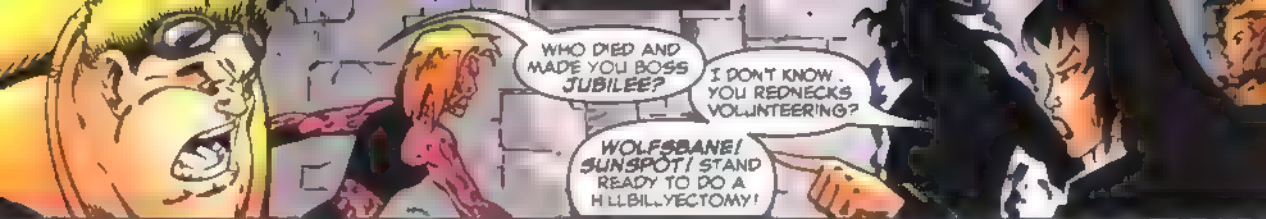


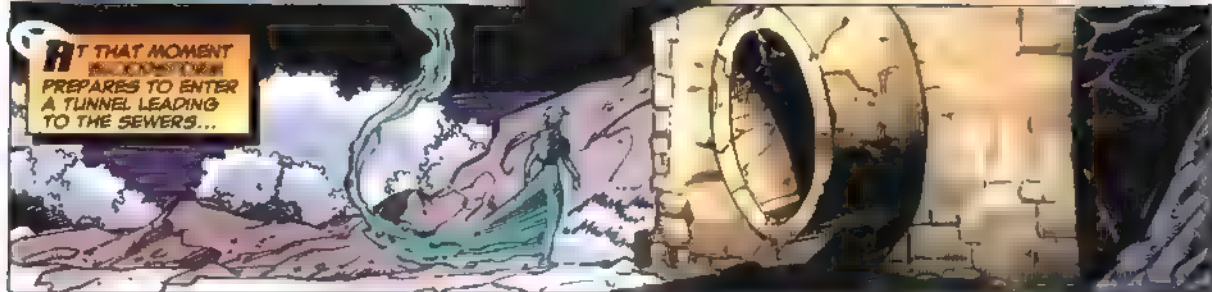
I WANT YOU
AS FAR AWAY
FROM IT AND
THAT WHICH IS
CONTAINED
WITHIN, AS
POSSIBLE.

IT IS
FOR YOUR
OWN GOOD.

AND FOR
MY ETERNAL
DAMNATION.







AT THAT MOMENT
PREPARES TO ENTER
A TUNNEL LEADING
TO THE SEWERS...



FWONK!



THAT WASN'T NICE WHAT
YOU DID TO ME BACK THERE,
BLOODSTORM!

I'M GOIN'
TA GIVE YOU A
PASS ON THAT
ONE, BUT JUS'
DIS ONCE



I HAVE BEEN
WARNED. NOW GO
HOME, KEMY.



PLEASE
WAIT!

I AM NOT
GOING TO FIGHT YOU
BUT PLEASE DON'T
MAKE ME FOLLOW
YOU IN THERE!

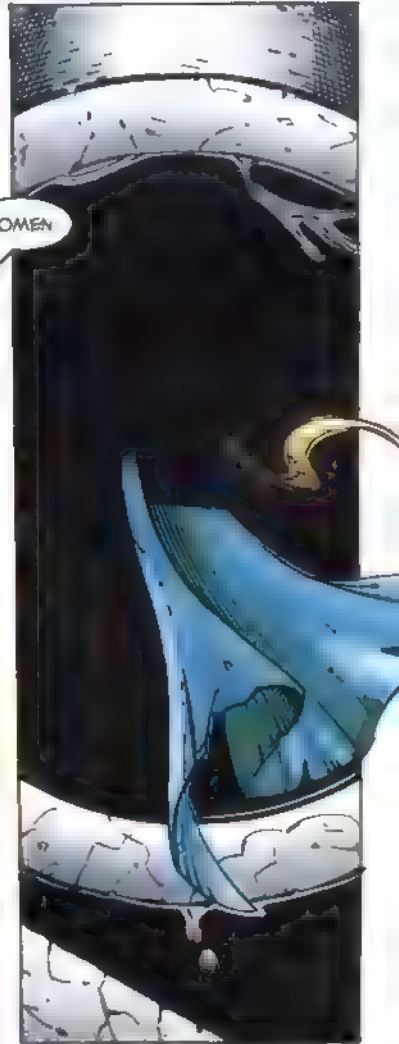
I BEEN DOWN
IN DESE SEWERS
BEFORE AND THERE'S
THINGS DOWN THERE
I HAD TO I

PLEASE
DON'T MAKE
ME

GO HOME,
GAMBIT.



WOMEN



MEANWHILE, THE MARAUDERS
BATTLE FOR THEIR LIVES

THIS HERE
DARKNESS...
CLOSING ON US...
IMPEENETRABLE... LIKE
IT WAS ALIVE!

I CAN'T
EVEN SEE A
WAY CLEAR TO
BLAST THROUGH
IT!

SUNSPOT!
Y'ALL WANT TO
GIVE ME A HAND
HERE?

I WOULD,
SAMUEL, BUT MY
POWERS ARE GREATLY
DIMINISHED FAR AWAY
FROM THE POWER
OF THE THE SUN.

OKAY! YOU
GUYS ARE JUST A
BUNCH OF IRRITATING
WHINERS!

I'LL GET US
OUT OF HERE. GET
THE BOX AND MAKE
SURE THE BOSS KNOWS
WHAT LOSERS YOU
ALL ARE!

WAIT! ONE
OF THEM IS
COMING IN...
FAST!

ER... GUYS?
TEAM? SOME
BACKUP
HERE!

CHILD, YOU
ARE PLAYING
WITH FORCES
YOU CANNOT
BEGIN TO COMPREHEND!

LEAVE
NOW.

LEAVE THE
BOX BEHIND AND
YOU MAY LIVE TO
SEE ANOTHER
SUNRISE.

SORRY!
NO CAN DO!

THE
BOX IS--



MORE DANGEROUS THAN YOU CAN EVER IMAGINE!

SHRAK!



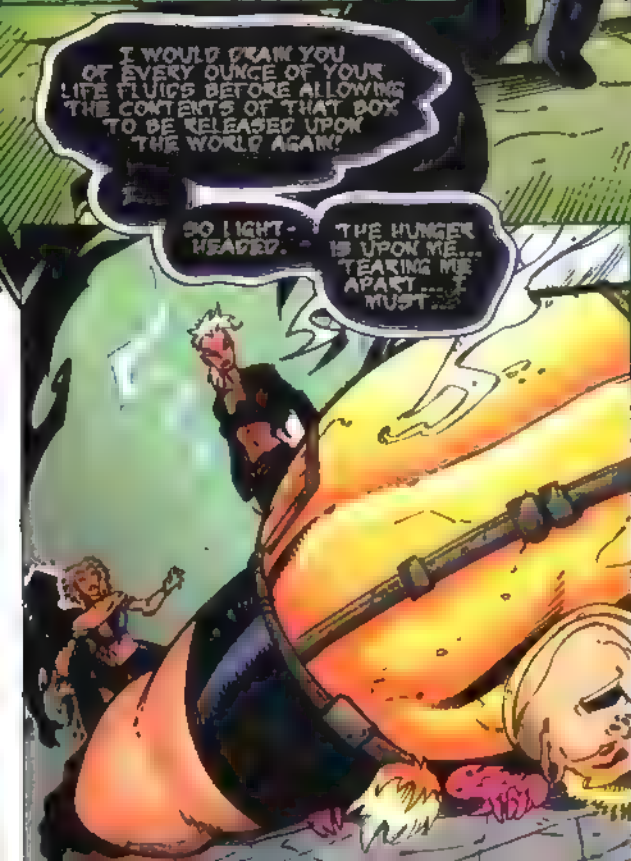
FRAKOOM!

YOU ARE ALL NOTHING MORE THAN CHILDREN... I HAVE NO WISH TO CAUSE YOU ANY HARM, BUT...

... YOU HAVE BROUGHT THIS UPON YOURSELF!

AND BLOOD MUST BE SPILLED.

ARGH!



I WOULD DRAIN YOU OF EVERY OUNCE OF YOUR LIFE FLUIDS BEFORE ALLOWING THE CONTENTS OF THAT BOX TO BE RELEASED UPON THE WORLD AGAIN!

SO LIGHT-HEADED...

THE HUNGER IS UPON ME... TEARING ME APART... I MUST...

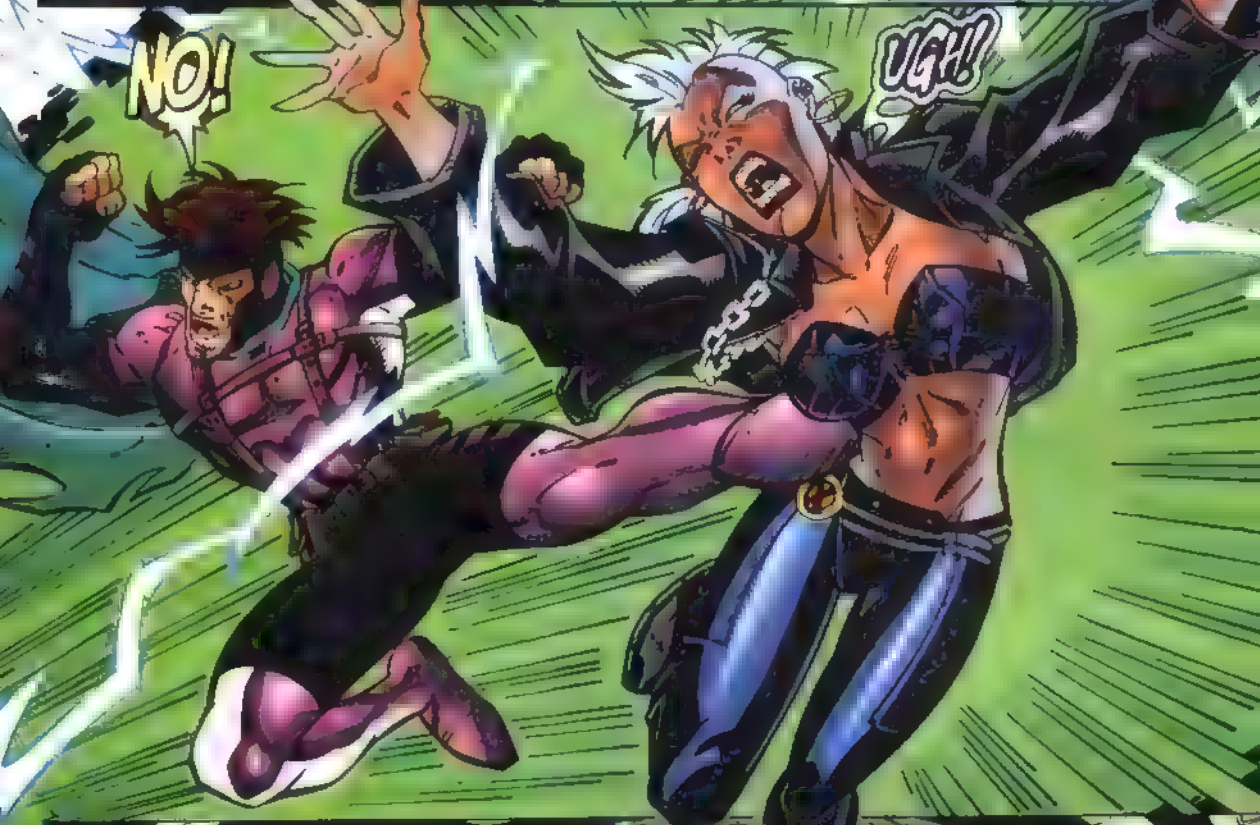


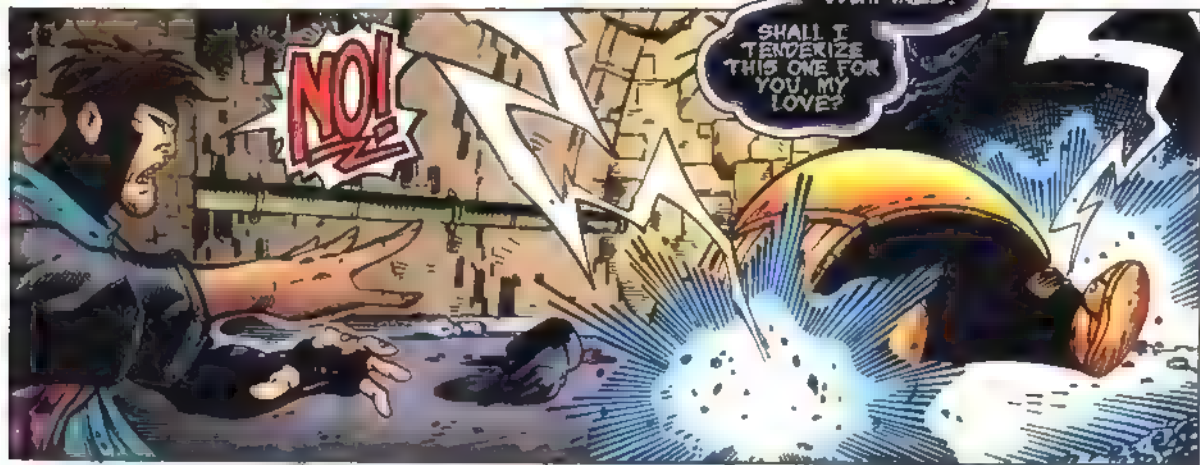
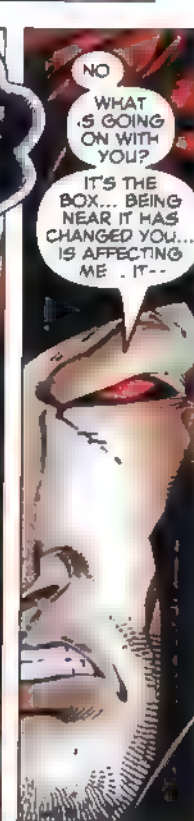
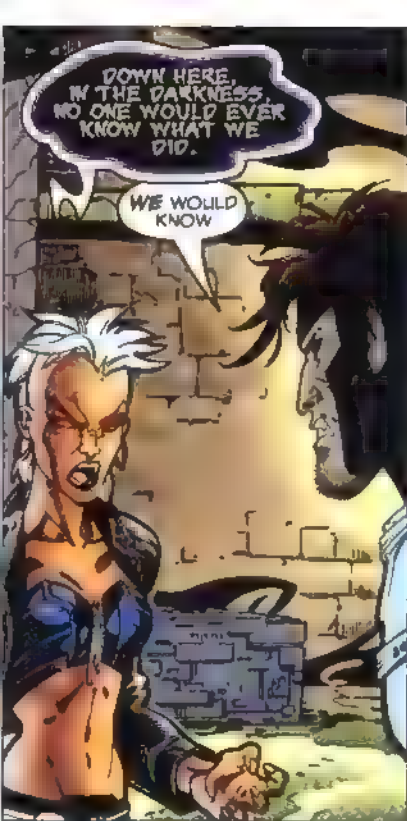
...FRED...

RUN.

ESCAPE IF YOU CAN.

DO IT NOW...







BKOOOM!



SPLASH!



NO!
WHAT
HAVE YOU
DONE?



WE MUST
GET IT BEFORE...
BEFORE...



THANK YOU,
REMY...

THANK
YOU SO
MUCH.



THE
BOX IS
GONE.

I WOULD
SUGGEST
WE DO THE
SAME.

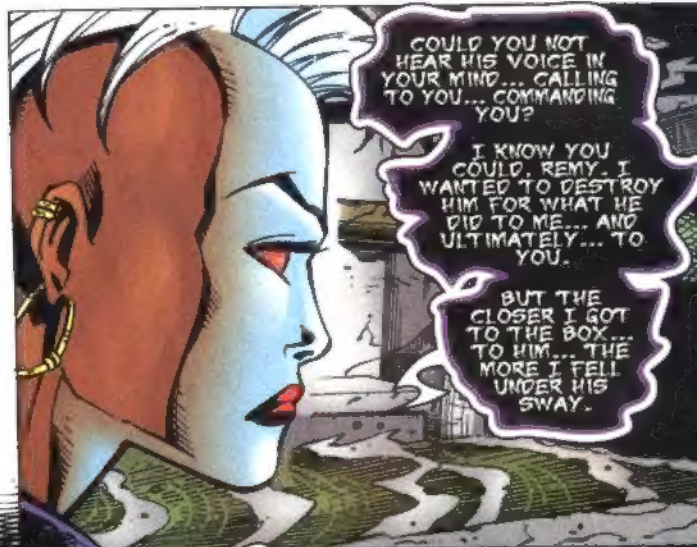


WHAT
WAS IT,
THERE?

WHAT
WAS IN THE
BOX?

NOT
WHAT...
WHO!

COULD YOU
NOT SENSE
HIM?



COULD YOU NOT
HEAR HIS VOICE IN
YOUR MIND... CALLING
TO YOU... COMMANDING
YOU?

I KNOW YOU
COULD, REMY. I
WANTED TO DESTROY
HIM FOR WHAT HE
DID TO ME... AND
ULTIMATELY... TO
YOU.

BUT THE
CLOSER I GOT
TO THE BOX...
TO HIM... THE
MORE I FELL
UNDER HIS
SWAY.



YOU
MEAN?

MY
DARK LORD
LIVES.

DRACULA
SOON WALKS
AMONGST
MANKIND.



NO, REMY
LEBEAU!

YOU ARE
TO STAY HERE
AND STAND TRIAL
FOR YOUR CRIMES
AGAINST... THE
OUTCASTS!

SO WE'LL
FIND HIM...
DESTROY
HIM.

EASIER
SAID THAN
DONE,
REMY.

WELL, FIRST
I T'INK WE BEST
BE GETTIN' OUT
OF DIS PLACE.



REMY,
WHAT--?



SORRY, CHERE,
I DID A BAD THING
ONCE UPON A TIME
AND NOW...

...IT'S
TIME TO
PAY!



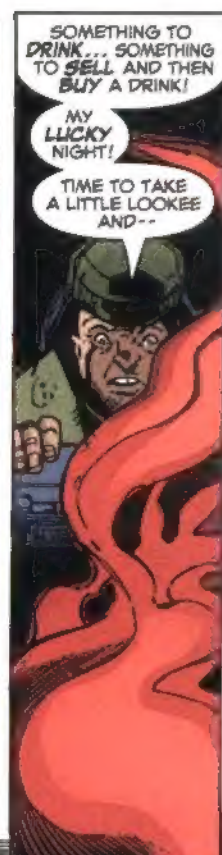
SOMETIME LATER...



WHAT'VE WE GOT HERE?



COULD BE SOMETHIN' GOOD.



SOMETHING TO DRINK... SOMETHING TO SELL AND THEN BUY A DRINK!

MY LUCKY NIGHT!

TIME TO TAKE A LITTLE LOOKEE AND--



HUGPH!



I HUNGER.

NEXT ISSUE:

BLOODSTORM MUST BATTLE THE OUTCASTS BEFORE GAMBIT IS CAST INTO THE LIGHT OF DAY.

ASHES TO ASHES.